

**Colorado Chemical Demilitarization Citizens' Advisory Commission (CAC)**  
**Informal Meeting Notes**  
**Dec. 10, 2008**

**Colorado Chemical Demilitarization Citizens' Advisory Commission**

**Attendees:** Jeff Chostner, Terry Hart, Irene Kornelly, Joan Sowinski John Thatcher, and Ross Vincent.

**Media Attendees:** *The Pueblo Chieftain:* John Norton

**Opening Comments/Announcements:** CAC Chair Irene Kornelly opened the meeting with legislative announcements and noted that U.S. Sen. Ken Salazar had issued a press release regarding the schedule slip with the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (PCAPP). Kornelly then presented an award from the CAC recognizing Joan Sowinski, who is retiring from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), as well as the CAC. U.S. Army Element, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA) Program Manager Kevin Flamm also presented Sowinski with a certificate acknowledging her years of service on the CAC.

**U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot (PCD) Update:** LTC Christopher Chesney reported that the depot had completed the propellant sampling and the test results should be available within a month. Chesney then introduced visiting U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency public affairs officer Greg Mahall. Chesney also introduced PCD's new public affairs specialist Ken Roque.

**PCAPP Year in Review:** Gary Anderson and Paul Henry provided an overview of major accomplishments associated with PCAPP in 2008. Anderson pointed out that Bechtel already has 90% of the FY 09 funds under contract. Henry focused on construction accomplishments noting that construction activities will increase even more in 2009, requiring the hiring of more craft workers. The year in review slides were well received with several CAC members saying that they were pleased with the progress report and the current level of funding. CAC members said they were also pleased with the project's commitment to safety, local staffing and being green.

**Public Involvement/Outreach Year in Review:** The outreach team was introduced, and Bob Kennemer presented a brief summary of public involvement activities for 2008. It was noted that site tours were increasing and served as an excellent outreach tool for educating key stakeholders. Members of the CAC agreed that the site tours are beneficial.

**Defense Access Road (DAR):** Pueblo County's Greg Severance and Karen Rowen with the Colorado Department of Transportation provided an update on the DAR. Several members of the CAC and local citizens expressed concern that the department had yet to commit to placing a traffic signal for the interchange of Highway 47 and the DAR. The chief concern voiced was the high speeds on Highway 47 combined with increased cross traffic could cause accidents. Severance and Rowen said the interchange would be monitored and if a traffic light was needed, one would be installed.

**ACWA Program Update:** Kevin Flamm provided a programmatic briefing focusing on the Selected Acquisition Report (SAR) and the Noblis and National Research Council (NRC) reports. Flamm first explained the need for ACWA to submit a SAR to Congress. Flamm stated a SAR can be triggered when a defense project's schedule is delayed by six months or more. A lengthy discussion on funding and schedule followed. Several CAC members said they were puzzled about the schedule slip as they thought the PCAPP project was now adequately funded.

Flamm then moved on to the topic of shipping agent hydrolysate off site, providing a brief historical perspective on the issue. This was followed by a review of the major findings of the NRC and Noblis studies. Flamm listed pros and cons of the off-site disposal option and highlighted the fact that safety and environmental considerations are cornerstones of the chemical weapons demilitarization program. Ross Vincent stated that Flamm's history of the hydrolysate issue goes back even further in time, noting the issue was first discussed by the CAC's Acceleration Options Working Group shortly after the attacks of Sept. 11. The presentation concluded with Flamm explaining the parameters of the decision-making process regarding hydrolysate and opened up the discussion to questions.

Several concerns were voiced by the CAC, with members pointing out there were additional cons. Sowinski said it is a gamble to assume that there will be numerous facilities available in the future to accept hydrolysate and the price could go up. Flamm responded that it was fair to assume that there will always be sites available to accept hazardous waste. Kornelly wondered if an additional Environmental Impact Statement would be required and added that the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) may not support deep well injection of hydrolysate. Flamm noted that deep well injection is a permitted and recognized disposal option and CWC approval is not required. Vincent said he believed there was also a moral issue at hand in that it is wrong to dump one's trash in their neighbors yard. Jeff Chostner agreed with Vincent.

Terry Hart expressed he felt that the decision was being rushed, and the CAC may need more time to think this issue over before providing additional feedback to Flamm, especially on the Noblis report, which he felt is flawed. Flamm went on to say that a decision was needed soon, especially for Pueblo, as the project is at a point where there is a need to move forward with purchases related to biotreatment. When Hart asked if he had already made his mind up, Flamm said he has not and was meeting with the CAC to gather more input before doing so, adding that he came into this issue favoring the off-site disposal option but he has gained appreciation of community issues. He wants to make sure he accurately characterizes both pros and cons to the upper levels of the Department of Defense (DoD). Jeff Chostner stated that because Pueblo has housed the weapons for so long, the community deserves the jobs that on-site biotreatment would bring. Chostner assured Flamm that a majority of the community supports on-site treatment of hydrolysate.

Local citizen Dave Barber expressed frustration saying this process had gone on too long. Barber echoed comments from the CAC saying that Pueblo deserves the jobs associated with onsite biotreatment. He encouraged Flamm to stand up to those in the Pentagon that want to ship the hydrolysate.

Flamm explained that he planned on making a decision within a week and would pass that recommendation on to a DoD governing board. That board would meet on Jan. 9. The board could then make a decision or they could ask Flamm to go back to the affected communities for further discussion.

The CAC members thanked Flamm and added that they felt their position was clear on this issue and they did not expect to change their minds. Flamm replied that it was his goal was to get this issue behind them and focus on a path forward.

**Subcommittee Updates:** Kornelly reported that the Permitting Working Group had met earlier in the day, but due to the late hour she would report on that session at the next CAC meeting.

The meeting was then adjourned.